

in all the municipal towns of the State. Government are also considering the question of extending the scope of the scheme to rural areas through the help of the Land Mortgage Bank or through Rural Building Co-operative Societies. Anyway, I can assure the house that the problem will receive the serious attention of Government in the near future. This is in addition to the declared policy of Government to give subsidies to the so-called Depressed Class people for constructing houses and free grant of house sites, either poramboke or acquired.

In the post-war schemes of Government which are being examined speedily, great importance is paid to Agriculture, Dairy-farming and improvement of Livestock. It is hoped that Government would be able to push through these schemes as early as possible. I have in my extensive tours in the villages throughout the State found that many useful tanks intended for minor irrigation, bathing purposes and for the use of cattle have been neglected and allowed to be silted up. In some cases they have been assigned to private persons in connection with grow-more-food campaign, and many of the assignees have used them for land grabbing purposes. This policy of Government has been like killing the duck that laid the golden eggs. It has been completely stopped. I am sure my colleague will undertake the task of improving a good number of such tanks by spending a good portion of the lump sum allotment provided for this purpose in the budget for next year.

A commercially-minded journalist wanted me to state the profit and loss I made during my stewardship in the last one year. It has been a year of stress and strain due to the existence of war and the aftermath after its termination. One year is too short a period to show any substantial work. However, I have mentioned, though not in detail nor very fully what little I have done. I am not, therefore, appearing before you as the old Roman Warrior with laurels to his credit, but as a willing servant anxious to serve the State, its benevolent Ruler and its people, especially the poor and the depressed, not seeking any honour or reward. "Silver and gold have I none." I have not deposited them anywhere secretly, nor have I built any mansion for myself. But I can state with satisfaction that I have been depositing the wealth of service I possessed, in the words of St. Tertullian, "into the bellies of the poor people" of the State, planning also for housing them comfortably, feeding them properly and clothing them decently. My motto is service and more humble service. In my earnest desire and attempt to serve the people of the State, a section of the press has been helpful in offering constructive criticisms, which I acknowledge with gratitude. I welcome fair criticism of my administrative actions. But I regret very much to state that a small section of the press cared only for circulation, trying even to create class hatred, forgetting the substantial interests of the State and its people. It will not be out of place if I mention here what Gandhiji said a few days ago about journals which publish distorted facts and unfair criticisms. He said, "My advice to you is not to take these reports as gospel truth. The news-paper reports have very often been highly coloured. I do not therefore, think that you will lose much if you did not read these reports".

Our objective is to achieve real and substantial progress for the State and to ensure the welfare of its people. This can be achieved by the attainment of full Responsible Government. I can assure the Hon'ble Members and the people of the State that I will strive my utmost to secure this goal. And I will consider it the proudest day of my life and my highest achievement if I am able to get it for them. It will be my constant endeavour to advise His Highness the Maharaja that in the contentment of His Highness' subjects rest the welfare of his people and the glory of his throne.

Speech by the Minister for Development

Mr. K. Balakrishna Menon (*Minister for Development*): Mr. President, Sir, On the first Edavam 1121, I was appointed Minister and was given charge of the newly transferred departments. From out of these, Medicine, Anchal and Registration were transferred to my Hon'ble colleague and I got Panchayat, Co-operation, Ayurveda, Industries, Arts and Crafts. In fact I am glad these are transferred to me as I desired to reorganise and give them a new life. But I have to confess at this stage that I could not do anything worth the name, as most of my time was taken up by Labour.

Labour.—The next day of my assuming charge, a deputation of the Beedi Workers' Union waited on me. Close in its wake came notices of strike, strikes and picketing. It would appear that all the turbulent waters of unrest and discontent in the State were waiting for this moment to burst themselves out. Under what limitations and in what way I tackled the situation are matters of recent history. What success I have achieved is a matter for you to judge. I am however happy to announce that our State is now comparatively calm, thanks to the hearty co-operation and good will extended to me both by the Employers and the Employees, and their representatives respectively.

But the time is come, if it is not already late, to lay down a definite policy in regard to Labour. Much is going to depend upon the wisdom of the Committee constituted to report on problems connected with Labour; but much more is going to depend upon the attitude of both the Employers and Employees. This attitude of theirs at present, can best be expressed by me by informing the House of what I was told by an eminent industrialist in regard to a small incident. "I have got a foot-ball ground prepared for my workers to play; purchased a foot-ball; and even got uniforms stitched; but they, the workers, would have me pay them wages if I would like them play".

In these words the industrialist portrayed the attitude of Labour and his own solicitude. If it be not presumptuous on my part, I would tell him and his class that the present and the future are of the Labour and for the Labour. At any rate, we have marched a long way from those dim distant days when Pharaoh forced the nude Abbyssinian to pile stone one above the other in tiers for his pyramids, to the colossal experiments that are being performed in terms of collective farming, notionalisation of industries, social insurance, old age pension etc. Labour, like a cactus plant, has taken a disproportionately long time to flower, but unlike it, it is not going to wither away so soon; and if a scientific study of history teaches a man anything, it is the process of a steady evolution on the part of the underdogs as though with a set purpose. Wars—tribal, statal, continental and ultimately global—all seem to have been aimed at attaining what France conceived in 1789 and Russia brought forth in 1918, that is to say, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. The idea is accepted by all. The difference is only one of pattern in which it is to be woven. Shall it be of the pattern of England, America or Russia, or a harmonious blending of all these so as to suit our own soil? That alone is the question.

Such being the fact, I put it to my friend, the industrialist, "Please do not look up to Government to play the part of King Canute. Take our advice and given them what is their due." I am sure you will admit that it is their due if only you spend a thought on the lot of those lean, lank scarecrows that prowl hunger-stricken, through the high-ways and bye-ways of our existence and who constitute the majority of our labour world. At break of day, like birds, the mates part in quest of food; but unlike them, when they return on the shades of night falling, they fight like Kilkenny cats. Instead of billing and cooing, there is a hot exchange of words, which more often ends in child-beating or wife-beating or in both. And Sir, the saddest part of the story comes, when I tell you that all this started from the heartrending wails of a hungry child for want of something to eat, to appease the pangs of hunger. The father shouts to stop the wailing, the mother remonstrates and the process of beating commences. The fact is, what with half a dozen children whom I can best describe in the language of Wodehouse, "as badly rolled cigarettes thin at both ends and bulging in the middle" and whom he cannot feed, clothe or shelter, what with half a dozen creditors ready to suck his life blood, he has passed to be a nerve-wreck. Those little trifles in life which we are prone to ignore, are more than enough to upset his mental equilibrium. You have seen, Sir, the advertisement of Jhonny Walker in some of the dailies. There is an old Colonel seated in a cosy arm chair with a bottle of whisky on one side and a mewling cat on the other. His forehead is puckered and lips are pursed; and lines of worry are drawn across his cheeks. The suggestion of the artist is that the mewling of the cat upsets the Colonel—for so complete a nerve-wreck is he—and that his only salvation lies in the burning liquor in the bottle. Now substitute the poor man for the Colonel, his broken cot for the cosy chair, the wailing child for the mewling cat, and a pot of toddy for Jhonny Walker; you get a complete picture of the poor man's life. The pittance that he has earned for the hard day's work, melts in liquor, thereby cheating the hungry child of a morsel of food. The wife remonstrates, the husband abuses. Thus the wheel of misery turns round and round and, caught in its vicious grip, these poor brethren of ours drag their weary existence till Death kindly interferes and snatches them away. Ask the labourer in his sober moment, "How do you do"; and you can hear the pathetic reply, 'well Sir, one day over, one step nearer the grave.' I ask our industrial magnet then, if the worker demanded payment for playing foot-ball, do not think

any the ill of him on that account; but drop a tear in silent mourning in that your forbears before you, have shirked a responsibility not for a day or two, but for years nay, for centuries. I therefore, appeal to the capitalists to approach the labourer's demands in that spirit.

Now, Sir, to the Labour population also, I would say a word. I hold that strike and picketting are the only sanction with which they could enforce their claims. What a sting is to the Bee, the paw is to the Tiger, the horns to the Buffalo, are strikes and pickettings to the labourers. I am not for depriving them of those weapons, but that does not mean that I am for the use of them indiscriminately. Nay I would suggest they will be well-advised to put off all ideas of strikes and pickettings for some time to come, and in the meanwhile to concentrate upon organising themselves. The organisation I contemplate will be on the following lines.—

Every factory or industry is to have a primary union consisting of all its workers, to be co-ordinated in its turn by regional unions constituted by secondary election, and ultimately controlled by an All Cochin Trade Union at the top. In this vertical structure there should be parallel lateral organisations for industries and factories of the same kind. The combined executive committee shall be the ultimate controlling authority in all matters affecting labour. Its primary function should be to make the factory not only a place in which the worker earns his toilsome wages, but the centre of his life, providing dwelling places, children's nursery school, kindergarten, his own and his wife's technical classes, excursion on free days, annual vacation, extensive and varied social insurance. As to whether the cost of these should form a part of the overhead charges of the undertaking, or be met by voluntary contribution by the workers, or partly by both, is a matter on which I do not propose to say one way or the other at present. But I do say, given good will, without legislative compulsion or the sanction of strikes and pickettings, these could be achieved. At any rate they should not be resorted to till all other methods are exhausted.

The method which I have in mind is the one which was discussed at the Conference of both the Employers and the Employees held at the Secretariat. I mean the establishment of the Conciliation Boards in every industrial concern, each Board consisting of equal number of representatives of Labour and Capital with or without a third party. This Board is to take seizin of all matters of difference as and when they arise, and on its failure to arrive at an amicable settlement, the matter is to be considered and decided by a Regional or All Cochin Super Conciliation Board constituted on the same lines as above.

Here let me impress upon the Boards one idea. If you do not approach the problem before you in a spirit of conciliation, failure is certain. The note in the discussion should not be one of conflict and struggle between two hostile parties each endeavouring to deprive the other of something to which it clings for its own benefits; but rather one of objective examination of the statistical facts and the consideration of the public policy to which both parties should agree to defer. After an earnest attempt if you fail, the Government would step in.

Let me however make it clear to all those to whom it may concern, that it is not the policy of the Government to refer every matter to a Court of Enquiry. The Government reserve the right to refer only such cases which in their opinion would vitally affect the State. Others, the Government would leave to be fought between the parties; and in the fight, so long as strikes and pickettings are non-violent and peaceful, the Government will not interfere. My personal view is, so far as it is possible, the element of compulsion by the Government should be avoided.

What I have suggested above is the only course for all concerned till the Committee constituted submits its report and necessary legislation is introduced. At present, there is no law declaring strikes and pickettings and lockouts illegal, except in the cases of essential services, which would come within the ambit of the Defence of India Rules. I thought of introducing during this session of the Council, necessary legislation after receipt of the Committee's reports. But the chances of receiving the same in the immediate future are few. The alternative for me would be to introduce an Amendment to the Trades Disputes Act. I attempted it. But the amendment I have in view would so change the Act itself that it will hardly be an amendment. I have therefore, dropped it, as I do not desire to forestall the Committee.

Now, Sir, I shall be failing in my duty if I do not refer to a peculiar phenomenon I find in the Labour movement. Of late, I have noticed a tendency both among the workers and their leaders to indulge in abuses. By no stretch of imagination can I see a place for abuse in the scheme of propaganda, unless it be for inciting violence. But no Government would take it lying low, for the simple reason that it is the elementary duty of all Governments to maintain

law and order. Its logical sequence then is arrest of your movement. You cannot afford it. I ask you what grace is there in shouting "down with the rich" at the gates of a man whom you approach subsequently with your hat in your hand saying, "please Sir, put something into this so that my children and myself may tide over the period of strike". I would have you convert them by the purity of your motive, the nobility of your action and the righteousness of your cause.

There is also a duty cast upon the politicians who have taken it upon themselves to mould this inchoate mass with a view to give it a form, shape and life. A false step or an unguarded word will defeat the purpose for which you are striving. There is a mad race between the political parties to get Labour into their respective folds; and in their over anxiety, they hold out promises and inflate the desires, with what result you can more or less imagine. I put it to them, there is a larger interest of the State at stake which they should not ignore. A well-disciplined and organised Labour is an asset not only to the Industry but also to the State. And I may assure them, they can look up to the Government for every assistance in doing it. In fact I have issued orders to the Labour Commissioner to the setting up of these informal domestic tribunals in every concern. We have already a few good ones on hand. It is also my desire to develop co-operative movement among them by introducing Housing Societies, Retail and Whole-sale stores on lines to be presently adverted to.

Now, Sir, one word regarding the Labour Department itself. It has to be reorganised. On what lines is the question. I went to Madras with a view to study the working of the Labour Department before I take it up on my hand. I now feel that it is better to do it after going to Bombay and Ahmedabad, to those big industrial and labour centres of India or wait and watch and do things according as it suggests to us.

Panchayats.—There are eighty-seven Panchayats in the State. These are our local self-governing institutions; but I am afraid if there is any real local self-government carried on by them. In the first place, their powers are limited; secondly, there is neither chance nor incentive for the best in the locality to get into them and work even in the circumscribed sphere with efficiency. To crown the whole thing, what little supervision exercised over them is by the Panchayat Department alone. It will not be hyperbolic to say that the Panchayats are only the minor organs of the Department itself. I have in mind the broad outlines of a scheme which I now place before the House for its consideration and which, if approved, can be worked out before the next Session of the Council.

The present Panchayats consist of five or six members each. Instead, I would have for every Panchayat, not less than 20 members. By this the worry and expense of election can be minimised, as smaller areas will have greater representation. These members will in their turn be divided into various committees each one having a separate subject to deal with. A few Panchayats of this kind may be grouped into what I may call Regional Panchayats, election to which will be from the Lower Body. I will put their number as six, one from each Panchayat. The various committees will work under the immediate supervision and direction of this Regional Body. Once again, in each Taluk, I will have a similar body consisting of members elected one from each of the Regional Panchayats. The Taluk body will be the immediate final authority for all matters relating to the village administration of the Taluk. It will co-ordinate the working of the Regional and the Village Panchayats and settle the finance for the area under each. These Taluk bodies will in their turn form an All Cochin Body whose working committee will take up the entire local self-government of the State. All nation-building departments will be the executive organs of this body.

In this pyramidal structure, the best man has an incentive to stand for the election and also a chance to work his way up to the Super Body. Each in its turn will check and countercheck; and by a stricter supervision, greater efficiency can be scored. And we should invest the Panchayats with powers of assessment as we do in the case of Municipalities, and give them unlimited sphere of action subject to being pulled up by superior authority when they contravene any specific prescription or action of the latter, or do anything inconsistent with or obstructive of the policy of higher constitutional bodies. It is now for the Hon'ble Members to spend a thought on this subject and if they endorse my scheme, we will work it up in detail and bring in a comprehensive legislation, when only I feel something genuine could be done to the country side.

Now in regard to the work for 1122, you will find from the budget, that a lump sum provision of Rs. 5 lakhs under Special Contribution and another lump sum provision of Rs. 1 lakh for silt clearance of public wells and tanks, have been made. You are aware of a

three-year plan evolved by my Hon'ble colleague while the Panchayat Department was under his charge. Materials have been collected and shifted. A committee had been constituted to look into the scheme and submit its report. As the committee could not finish its labour before the budget preparation, the only course was to make a lump sum provision; and I did it. Since then the Committee's report has come in, and it is placed on the Council Table. You will find from that admirable work the general lines on which the village improvement is to be taken up. But it does not help us in the choice to be made, or priority to be given. Personally I feel we have to take up minor irrigation works in the first instance for more reasons than one. There are hundreds of poramboke tanks all now lying with accumulated silt. If the silt were to be removed, we get abundance of water to feed vast stretches of arable land, especially during those periods when the monsoon fails. If along with these, the jenmies are also made to renovate their tanks, I am sure, to an appreciable extent, we can stabilise agriculture. Cochin, along with India, seems to be the only civilised country which depends upon rainwater for successful agricultural operations. The time is come when irrigation has to be stepped up for which the major schemes now incorporated in the Post War Reconstruction will have to be expedited. This does not mean, however, that other items will not be taken up now. As observed before, each will be considered according as its urgency and importance. But the policy of the Government will be to take up the minor irrigation schemes for the whole of the State for the year 1122, and push them through. If additional staff is found necessary, that will be met from the lump sum provision. A list of works on the lines suggested above is placed on the Council table. The list pertaining to the Panchayat Department alone takes in Rs. 4,20,000. The balance of Rs. 1,80,000 has been distributed among the departments of Co-operation, Industries, Ayurveda, Agriculture, Public Health and Uplift of the Depressed Classes. Soon after the Budget session, it is proposed to convene a conference of the Panchayat Presidents in order to scrutinise the above list and to prepare a final list of works to be taken up in the next year under the above head.

Let me also say at this stage that I am not unmindful of the extreme necessity of good drinking water for the coastal regions. You are already aware of the partial solution of the problem by carrying Alwaye water in barges. Now that the monsoon has broken out, this has become impossible. The Government have a scheme of carrying water through a submerged pipeline. It is under the consideration of experts. After their report and on the availability of materials, the work will be taken up without further loss of time.

Municipalities.—Closely allied to the Panchayats are the Municipalities. You are already aware of the many schemes to improve the big towns of the State. They are being considered by the Post War Reconstruction and Town Improvement Committees. At present, therefore, I can give you only a rough idea of the shape of things to come. Thus in Ernakulam, you will get the 70 feet wide road running up to Thevara, which as it will be worked up, will also clear away the low lying marshy regions, the breeding place of mosquitoes. The backwater portion from the Huzur Jetty to the Railway Bridge is to be reclaimed. This will yield us about forty and odd acres of new land for residential quarters, public offices and business centres. In the same way, broad roads are to be opened, the foreshore is to be reclaimed, and swamps are to be cleared in Mattancheri. A scientific system of drainage is envisaged for both the towns.

For Trichur, the concreting of roads is to be taken up next year. So also, we are tackling the water supply problem. Other improvements such as, extension of the Havelock Market, opening of Parks, etc., are under the consideration of the Government.

No big schemes are now contemplated for the other Municipalities. The Government are watching their progress.

Co-operation.—Now I come to the Co-operative movement in the State. So far emphasis has been laid primarily on co-operative credit societies; and that coupled with the absence of proper supervision, accounts for the slow progress of the movement in the State. As originally suspected and subsequently confirmed by my study of the Co-operative movement in Madras, the defect was that there was no organisational section here. In Madras, the department, speaking generally, contains three sections; auditing and liquidation, judicial and organisational. The Inspectors here, who are primarily meant for the first category of work, discharge the duties appertaining to the last two. With a view to cure this defect, I have now made provision in the budget for the appointment of five Organisers with each a peon, whose sole work will be organisation.

These officials will organise Producers' Co-operative Societies on one side and Consumers' on the other on parallel lines. In between will stand the Marketing Societies and Wholesale

Purchasing Societies and the former will absorb the finished products or the first, and the latter will distribute them to the second. In its vertical structure, each one will have the primary society for each village or villages at the bottom, with a Union in the middle of a few societies and an All Union Council at the top. There may also be brought into existence lateral organisations as and when the undertakings are common. Then again, supplementary parallel societies may be built up; for instance for the joint supply of tools, raw materials or auxiliary components, house building, transport, etc. You can have them for single purpose or multipurpose and multiply them *ad infinitum*, with always this structural principle in view.

It should be reserved to the All Union Council, the organising work, accountancy, directorial and prospective planning, and representation to Government regarding credit, funds, grants subsidies and protection. What kind and what amount of production should be undertaken by the societies, will be decided in consultation with the All Union Council; and after preparing a plan, it will be submitted to the Union Council and the societies in turn for their criticism, objection or counter proposal, which will be duly considered before finally approved. By methodic planning and supervision, efficiency and success are aimed at. It is the hope of the Government to bring the cottage industries, fair price shops, stores, housing, agricultural implements, transport, etc.; under the movement so as to make the modern amenities of life within the easy reach of all alike, eliminating the toll-taking middle men and profiteers.

Apart from the State aid, the Central Co-operative and Land Mortgage Banks respectively will also be so reformed as to render to the movement all financial help when and where it is necessary.

Ayurveda.—I suppose that you are aware of the ambitious scheme of the Madras Government to open Ayurvedic hospitals, Vaidyasalas and Colleges in the presidency on a par with the Allopathic hospitals and Colleges. When I went to Madras, I placed a suggestion before the Hon'ble Minister for Public Health to pool the resources of both the Governments in the matter of opening an Ayurvedic College at Cheruthuruthi for Kerala.

I am told that there is a section of the public who would like to know why this place is suggested. To them I say, "Come and have a look at the place. You will love it at first sight." I wonder if there is any other place in Kerala to equal it. The River Bharatha, with its sandy beds and crystal water skirts it on the northern side and the main trunk road on the west. But the charm lies in the lay out of the garden and the location of the buildings for hospitals, stores and paywards and in the stonepaved bathing ghats, and up-to-date lamp posts at well planned squares. In the cool shades of its bowers, or under the spreading mango trees, the patients can rest, and draw from nature what no medical art could give. To crown, it is so close to the Shoranur Junction. By its natural beauty and proximity to Shoranur and the availability of land and building this place is chosen.

It is my idea to shift the present Hospital to this place. Attached to it, a Herbarium is to be opened under the expert guidance of a Botany Graduate, provision for which is made in the budget. There if the college which the Madras Government had an idea of opening at Palghat, were located, it will be a boon for both the State and Malabar. I have set in motion the correspondence on the subject, and if it materialises an additional allotment will have to be moved for. I may incidentally inform the House that the College course is a post-graduate one on purely Indian lines.

Beyond that, I have remedies for a long felt and overdue grievance by confirming the Sales and Manufacturing section. I have also passed orders abolishing the depots on the recommendations of the Superintendent of Ayurvedic Hospitals, Comptroller of Finance and Accounts and the Secretaries. Though the decision was then to give the sales to private agencies I have now resolved to give a chance to Co-operative Societies in selected areas to conduct them. By giving additional staff and reorganising the Sales and Manufacturing section, it is hoped that there will be corresponding efficiency in the manufacture of medicines.

Regarding hospitals and vaidyasalas, I have my own doubts if it is not better to improve the existing ones than establishing more. But it is too late to work out that policy in detail, and so I have retained the budget prepared by my colleague as it is.

Industries.—Lastly I come to industries.—If I understand the term correctly, it means cottage industry. There is a good deal to be done here. It is my idea to bring cottage industries within the fold of Co-operative movement. In fact Producers' Co-operative Societies are contemplated for them also. Co-operative Industry, in which the form of Handicraft Association predominates, plays a great part in the industrial life of the State. It supplements by producing

auxiliary articles, working up State raw materials and semi-finished goods and producing articles for the general market.

We have in the State what are called Industrial schools and schools of Arts and Crafts. The schools contain more teachers than students. Some of them I visited reminded me of the Lady of the Silent Hall. I hold the view that either these schools be handed over to Co-operative Societies or got attached to other schools of the State. The wiser policy appears to be to absorb the industrial school teachers in the ordinary literary schools where these crafts could also be taught as arts are now being done. For higher course of study, we can retain the Arts and Crafts Schools of Emakulam and Trichur and improve them by holding out better attraction in terms of stipends and scholarships.

Once again I regret to say, Sir, that the time before me was too short to examine these schemes in all their implications, especially on the financial side. I sometimes wonder if it may not be profitable to cry a halt to the adoption of further new schemes, and be content with pushing through the ones we have on hand. You can soon hear the Finance Member saying that while our expenditure is mounting high, the resources remain static if they are not already showing a tendency to go down. The time, therefore, has come for all of us to spend a serious thought on the subject. It appears to me that the only way open to us is to revolutionise the industrial policy of the State. We have here a first class Harbour easily accessible by road, rail and backwaters. With these facilities, a vigorous industrial policy, sufficiently courageous, will attract big industries. The advent of industries will make our resources elastic and at the same time help us in solving the problem of unemployment if not completely, at least partially.

In the meanwhile, by building up the various organisations referred to above and by nursing them under the parental care of the State, we would be taking long strides in the political, social and economic progress of the State. Organisations—Trade Union, Co-operative or Panchayat—have a tremendous educative value. Organisation means adjustment, discipline and common purpose. It means opportunity to hear, to question and to decide. It arouses in the rank and file that consciousness of consent which is so necessary for effective democracy. It means the pooling of resources, collective effort for the maximum good of the maximum number of people. And I feel bold to say that we may not have the occasion to rue the day when we took this bold step.

6. Announcement of Panel Chairmen

Mr. President: I have to announce that I have nominated the following Hon'ble Members to constitute the Panel of Chairmen—

Rao Bahadur T. S. Narayana Ayyar and Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan.

7. Message of the Diwan to the President referring the Cochin Verumpattamdars Act (Amendment) Bill of Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan

Secretary to the Council: Under sub-section (1) of Section 27 of the Government of Cochin Act, I have the honour to return the Cochin Verumpattamdars Act (Amendment) Bill of Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan passed by the Legislative Council on 29th November 1945 for reconsideration by the Council on the following point.—

Under Section 8 of the Cochin Verumpattamdars Act, VIII of 1118, if a Verumpattamdar fails to pay the pattam in respect of his holding within three months of the due date, the lessor can sue for eviction of the Verumpattamdar and the Court shall be bound to order the eviction of the Verumpattamdar and shall not extend the time or condone the delay in the payment of such pattam. Clause 3 (2) of the above Bill provides that where eviction is sought on the ground of non-payment of pattam, if the Verumpattamdar, at the *hearing of the suit* pays or tenders payment of the pattam in arrear together with interest thereon and the full costs of the suit, or furnishes security for payment of the same within fifteen days, the Court shall instead of ordering eviction of the holding, relieve the Verumpattamdar against the forfeiture incurred by him for non-payment of pattam and allow him to continue to hold the property as if the forfeiture had not occurred.

From the wording of the clause it is not quite clear whether the benefit is proposed to be conferred only on the Verumpattamdars who make the payments at the *first hearing of the suit*, or at any other stage of the suit. The expression "*hearing of the suit*" may take in subsequent hearings, including appeals and second appeals. As the amendment seeks to take away a safeguard vouchsafed to the land-owner for the prompt payment of pattam, it is only just that the relief